



Festival of youth

Six bands are performing tonight in a Fangjia Hutong courtyard to kick off the third 789 Festival Young, a presentation of artists born after 1970.

Starting this week, *Beijing Today* is adding two new pages: Livehouse and Art. The new pages will cover developments in the capital's musical and artistic underground.

Read more on Page 18

Pages 12-13 Year of Lang Lang

Since changing labels, Lang Lang has been devoted to art, education and philanthropy.



Page 22 A doll obsession

Dolls – especially the ones sought after by these serious collectors – are not just for little girls.



Single moms face financial hardship

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Egyptian sees career after dating show

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Experts say no fault in criminal draft amendment

China's draft amendment to the Criminal Procedure Law will further help protect human rights, while conforming to international conventions, legal experts in Beijing said.

The experts made the remarks in response to doubts cast by international media about an article in the draft submitted to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), China's top legislature, last week.

International media said the article violates international conventions and international law.

Article 73 of the draft provides that, in criminal cases involving national security, terrorism or serious bribery, the defendants or suspects can be put under residential surveillance in places outside their own homes if residential surveillance is likely to hinder an ongoing investigation.

The article also stipulates that when suspects or defendants are held under surveillance outside their homes, their family members should be informed within 24 hours of the surveillance, as well as informed of the reasons for surveillance and the sites, except in cases where family members cannot be reached or

when reaching them could hinder the investigation.

The wording in the draft indicates that police will first consider the grounds requiring the authorities to give notice to family members, Wang Minyuan, a legal researcher with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and vice president of the criminal procedure law branch of the China Law Society, told Xinhua.

Current law in China stipulates two types of compulsory measures taken against suspects: depriving suspects of personal freedom, including detention and arrest, as well as limiting personal freedom through residential surveillance and obtaining a guarantor or bail pending trial.

Residential surveillance is a measure limiting a suspect's personal freedom. It can be taken by authorities when an arrest is unnecessary, impossible or unsuitable in a specific case. It is generally enforced at the suspect's home.

The primary purpose of residential surveillance is to facilitate criminal procedures by preventing a suspect from fleeing, colluding in testimonies, destroying evidence or committing more crimes, said Song Yinghui, associate dean of

the Law School of Beijing Normal University.

The draft amendment strictly restricts the use of surveillance in places outside suspects' homes to cases involving national security, terrorism and serious bribery, and it also requires strict approval procedures, Song said.

Regarding the clauses authorizing police not to inform a suspect's family members under certain conditions, Wang said, "These clauses are an exception, and will not become regular. This is a common consensus among the Chinese legal profession."

The current Criminal Procedure Law, once revised in 1996, only stipulates in articles 64 and 71 that police should notify the family members or the employer of an arrested party or detainee about the reasons for the arrest and site of custody within 24 hours after the arrest or detention, except in circumstances where such notice could hinder an investigation or there is no way of notifying them.

The draft amendment has strengthened, not weakened human rights protection, because measures when a suspect is taken into custody, such as arrest and

detention, are much harsher than residential surveillance.

As for some opinions and concerns that residential surveillance will be handled as another form of detention, experts argue that surveillance is just a police measure to keep an eye on suspects in order to facilitate the investigation.

When suspects are under residential surveillance, they can still leave the surveilled place and meet with others as long as they have obtained approval from authorities. They should answer the authorities' summons within a reasonable amount of time, and their rights to go to work or school are guaranteed.

The draft amendment does not violate international conventions. Instead, it is in line with the purposes of international law that advocate the protection of suspects' rights by using the fewest compulsory measures possible in criminal procedure, he said.

According to the draft amendment, if a suspect or defendant who should be arrested is seriously ill or is a pregnant woman or a woman breast-feeding her own baby, residential surveillance can be carried out instead of enforcing the arrest. (Xinhua)

New plan targets foreign tourists

By Zhang Dongya

Beijing is aiming to attract more foreign tourists as part of the 12th Five-Year Plan for tourism, issued Thursday by the Beijing Tourism Administration (BTA).

Lu Yong, director of BTA, said the municipal government will develop an "international tourism city alliance" to strengthen the city's relationship with other domestic tourist cities, such as Shanghai, Xi'an and Guilin.

The plan also calls for the creation of new urban sky shuttles.

BTA is considering extending the alliance to include worldwide tourist cities. It plans to promote Beijing's leading role in organizations like The World Union of Olympic Cities and The Organization of World Heritage Cities.

It will also open tourism offices in foreign cities that tend to be a major source of tourists, including New York, Paris and Tokyo, and will expand its presence in the tourism market of BRIC countries - Brazil, Russia and India - and CIVITS countries such as Vietnam, Indonesia, Turkey and South Africa.

In addition, it will enact new policies to promote inbound tourism.

For international conferences, large performances and trade shows, the government will offer simplified procedures for visas and customs. It is also considering allowing the use of foreign currency at some scenic spots and hotels.

BTA will also develop tourism products related to Beijing's local culture and specialties in plays, literature and the arts.

It will also focus on stopping some problems in the local tourism industry, such as illegal one-day tours, Zhao Guangchao, the BTA commissioner, said.

Rewards for travel agencies to encourage their cooperation will also be on the agenda.

Starting this year, Beijing will invest 1 billion yuan each year to promote local tourism, BTA said.

The goals of the Five-Year Plan include generating \$10 billion (64 billion yuan) from inbound tourism each year and bringing in 10 million visitors. In 2010, Beijing generated a total of 270 billion yuan from all forms of tourism.

Charity store faces difficulties operating after trial period

By Han Manman

Beijing's first government-run charity store in Xicheng District received very little attention during its first week of formal operation. The situation has lowered many people's expectations of the feasibility of its model.

The store, conceived as a community effort to assist poor and disadvantaged families and channel more funds to charities, opened last Friday after three months of trial operations.

The store sold discount groceries and goods donated by various charities, such as stationery and decorative items. The income for the store, except for basic employee pay, would be funneled back into charity funds.

However, local residents seemed unaware of its charitable purpose and came only to buy low-price groceries.

"The price here is much lower than in neighboring shops," a customer surnamed Xu said, adding that the price of some fruits fell throughout the day.

Very few customers inquired about the goods on sale for charities or bought goods donated by the Red Cross Society of China and the China Disabled Persons' Federation.

Liu Jipeng, director of Xicheng Donation Management Center, said the format of the charity store may not have been mature enough.

"We are still doing research and exploring this method of charitable



Few customers buy the goods donated by charities and are unaware of the store's charitable purpose.

donation, which still needs to be adjusted under the supervision of related regulations," he said.

Liu said the center plans to build a monitoring network platform to connect local civil affairs and the charity store to "ensure all profits of the stores are used for charity."

He said it will also consider recruiting volunteers to lower labor costs.

Charity stores were created in the US some hundred years ago. The shops were usually run by local charity organizations and sold

donated household goods, books and clothing, as well as gifts. Most were staffed by volunteers.

Charity store development in China has been quite slow compared with the US and UK.

China's first charity store opened in Shanghai in 2003, and since then they have spread to most big cities.

But the stores are struggling to survive because it is difficult to raise funds and improve their visibility.

A charity store in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province closed only 11 days

after opening on July 23.

A total of 31 charity shops in Luohe, Henan Province also shut down this May after two years of poor operation.

Zhang Yiwu, deputy director of the Cultural Resources Research Center at Peking University, said the country's charity industry is still in its infancy: government and public supervision remain crucial.

The reasonable prices of the goods on sale are expected to aid the development of the Chinese charity sector.

Pilot who ignored mayday calls banned for life

By Chu Meng

The South Korean pilot of Juneyao Airlines flight HO-1112 has been banned for life from flying in China after refusing to yield his landing slot to a Qatar airplane that requested an emergency landing in August.

The East China Regional Administration Office under the Civil Aviation Administration of China handed down the punishment on Monday night and deemed the incident a "serious violation of regulations."

The Shanghai-based airline apologized on Wednesday, but did not elaborate on why its pilot refused to comply with the orders given by air traffic control.

"Regardless of the circumstances surrounding the incident, it was the pilot's mistake to reject his orders from air traffic control. The company will strictly comply with all penalties handed down by the aviation authorities," Juneyao Airlines said in a letter of apology published on its website.

It also pledged to fire the pilot and educate its other foreign pilots about China's civil



Juneyao Airlines will not elaborate on why its pilot refused Qatar airplane's request.

CFP Photo

aviation regulations.

The East China Regional Administration Office said it had notified the South Korean government about the pilot's employment restrictions in China.

The office further suspended the license of the co-pilot for six months and rejected Juneyao's plans to open new branches, expand its air fleet and recruit pilots from abroad. It also ordered an investigation into Juneyao's foreign workers and slashed its capacity by 10 percent for the next three months.

The pilot of HO-1112, whose name is being kept confidential, was the first foreign pilot to receive this top penalty.

Air traffic controllers at Shanghai's Hongqiao Airport received a mayday call from Qatar Airways flight QR-888, which reported having only minutes of fuel remaining on August 13.

The administration reported last Sunday that the pilot of flight HO-1112 had violated regulations and ethics codes when he refused to comply with six air traffic controllers' mayday

calls and make way for Qatar Airways flight QR-888. He told air traffic controllers that his plane was also almost out of fuel.

Both planes were later discovered to have enough fuel to remain airborne.

Excluding emergency reserves, Juneyao's smaller Airbus A320 plane had 2.9 tons of fuel left — enough to stay airborne for 42 minutes: Qatar's Boeing 777-300 jet had 5.2 tons of fuel, enough for 18 minutes of flight.

Chen Kai, an aircraft engineer at Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, said the pilot of Qatar Airways should also be punished for miscalculating the fuel requirements for his flight.

"Actually, many international pilots lie about their fuel to get faster take-off and landing orders from China's air traffic controllers. People doing this to skip the traffic queue have become a serious problem," he said.

Yesterday, aviation administrators notified Qatar Airways and the International Civil Aviation Organization about what happened.

Bodyguard industry taking off in China

By Zhao Hongyi

Forty-two body guards graduated from the first China VIP Bodyguard Training Camp on Tuesday. Rather than caps and gowns, they had black suits and sunglasses.

Most of the graduates look fairly average, but they have been trained in driving, counter-terrorism and international business.

As part of their training, they were left to survive on an island in the Yellow Sea for 28 days.

Most of the graduates have been recruited by CEOs, chairmen and rich individuals to guard senior supervisors of big companies.

Their average yearly income is 280,000 yuan, and the highest-paid bodyguard earns more than 800,000 yuan, Chen Yongqing, secretary of the training camp, said.

In the past three decades of rapid development, China has seen an increasing number of wealthy people seeking bodyguards to protect themselves and their families.

Last year, the Chinese congress revised and promulgated the Rules for Security Services, which legalized the bodyguard industry.

At that time, China had almost 3,500 security companies and 3.5 million people employed by that sector, according to the China Security Association.

But most of the companies and employees only provided security services to residential communities, shopping malls, big companies and special events like the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008 and Shanghai Expo 2010.

"We need a huge number of sophisticated personal bodyguards," Chen said.

Chen is also the chairman of the Beijing-based Tianjiao Bodyguard and Security, which like many companies is struggling to find enough bodyguards to meet the market demand.

Last October, 300 bodyguards from Tianjiao worked at the Shanghai Expo as drivers, assistants, secretaries, tour guards, emergency servants and health advisors.

But most companies are only interested in recruiting fighters, said Dai Sihong, vice president of the China Security Association.

"Combat ability is the basic technical requirement in this sector," Chen Yongqing said. "But bodyguards must also learn psychology and foreign languages to increase their professional capability."

Bloody swallow nests confirmed as fake by Malaysia



Representatives for Malaysia say the country only exports the normal white swallow nests.

Xinhua Photo

By Zhao Hongyi

Two fake Malaysian officials who were trying to sell "blood nests" at a market in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province are being deported to face punishment in their home country.

Jamaludin bin Abdul Aziz, a spokesman for the Agriculture and Agro-based Industries Ministry of Malaysia, told Chinese media the men will probably be sentenced to many years in prison.

Officials said Malaysia only exports the normal, white swallow nests and no blood nests at a press meeting held earlier this

week in Shanghai.

Swallow nests are a traditional food in China. The nests are built from the bird's dried-up, protein-rich saliva. The nests are traditionally cleaned and boiled in soups, which many believe to be a healthy and luxurious food. It is most popular in the southern coastal provinces of Guangdong, Fujian and Zhejiang.

But in recent years, swallow nests have become exceptionally rare on the Chinese mainland. Most nests sold are imported from Malaysia and Indonesia, where Chinese immigrants are engaged

in large-scale production.

The annual swallow nest output of Malaysia alone is estimated to be more than 500 tons, 300 of which are exported to China, Korea and Japan, the Malaysian officials said.

Last month, CCTV ran a program about swallow nest production in Indonesia and Malaysia. In the report, CCTV spoke to two businessmen who said that "blood nests" occur when swallows build their nests in deep caves. The nests get their color from dripping water that is rich in ferric oxide.

The natural red nests were

exceptionally rare and consumed entirely by local markets in Malaysia and Indonesia.

However, the nests being sold on the Chinese market were created domestically by merchants who dyed common nests with ferric oxide and toxic chemicals.

When tested, the red nests had nitrite levels of more than 4,400 milligrams per kilogram: one even had more than 10,000 milligrams.

The press meeting this week is believed to be a step to save the market and protect the reputation of Malaysia's nest exports.

The challenge of unwed motherhood

By Yao Weijie

Unwed mothers in China have it tough. Their children often fall into a legal gray area, and their income is rarely high enough to support a family. Most spend their days unhappy and desperate.

Society is gradually coming to tolerate the phenomenon, but happiness depends on more than social acceptance: it requires careful planning and strong financial support.

Mei Yangyang, a college teacher, lived a tedious and lonely life before her one-night stand with a man she barely knew. That was the night she became a mother.

Though Mei never found her baby's father, she chose to give birth anyway. It was a choice she would not regret. After her child came into her life, she never felt lonely anymore.

Mei's story is by far the exception, as it should be, since it is partly fiction. Mei is the lead character in *Unmarried Age*, a semi-autobiographical published in 2010 by Bing Mugua.

"There are many unwed mothers today in China. I wanted to tell people the way they live," said Bing, who was born in the 1970s.

"Most Chinese women hope to be married and have a family: they raise the baby on their own only because they have to. These women are often the mistress in another relationship," Bing said.

That's how it was for Li Lan, a 27-year-old woman and the mother of a 4-year-old child.

Li was the mistress of a rich, married man. She hoped that after she became pregnant the man would leave his wife; instead, he left her.

"Except for my son, I had nothing that I could use to anchor him to me," she said.

The next four years were an endless emotional entanglement. Li has a hard time supporting her child as the father gave her little money.

Today she wants financial support, not love. However, under a new interpretation of the marriage law by the Supreme Court, she may not be entitled to even a penny. The court recently locked out third parties from claiming a married couple's property as compensation.

"Most unwed mothers became so because they hoped to use a child to get love from a married man. Children are traditionally seen as important – especially sons," Bing said.

"I don't understand why there are so many young women born in the 1980s and 1990s who try to get a man by giving birth to a baby. They seem too anxious to grab a man's heart and money, and their behavior really lowers the status of Chinese women."

But there is another class of unwed mothers.

With the surge in the unmarried population, many women are simply being abandoned by their boyfriends or lovers, like Bing's character Mei.

"Unless they have financial stability, these women tend to be unhappy," Bing said.

Wang Han, a 35-year-old woman, has been pregnant for six months. Her former boyfriend met a new woman and canceled his plans to marry Wang. Doc-



Children may bring happiness, but many unwed mothers struggle both socially and financially.

tors warned her that having an abortion at that stage could ruin her chances for future pregnancy.

Faced with the decision, Wang chose to keep the baby.

When Wang's mother heard, she warned her daughter to give it up, and said Chinese men usually refuse to marry a woman who has divorced – especially one who has already had a child.

"I want to give birth to my baby," Wang said. "I want to be a mother, and this may be my only chance. I don't care whether or not I can still get married."

But giving birth out of wedlock is technically illegal.

Wang left her parents' home and began renting a single-storey house in a

hutong. She convinced a friend to temporarily register for marriage with her so she could get a license. She then used the marriage license to obtain a permission certificate, which Chinese hospitals require before delivering a child.

She has avoided as many checkups as possible, since her ex-boyfriend is providing her little in compensation. Her current salary is 6,000 yuan per month, which will barely be enough to support rearing a child. After the baby is born, she plans to find a part-time job.

"I won't regret my decision," she said. But obtaining a hukou for her child may be difficult, and without it the child will not be allowed to go to school.

"I am worried about my baby's future. Many people said I am being irresponsible, because a single-parent family is not conducive to a child's growth," she said.

"Mothers can pass their own hukou on to the child if they are willing to pay enough, otherwise they have to pay numerous penalties," said Li Sheng, a professor of law at Nankai University. "That will put even more pressure on Wang's income."

Mei Yangyang's story seems to be the lone exception.

Mei was wealthy enough to deliver her baby in Hong Kong, where it was given automatic residency. Her high salary helped her avoid others' condemnation.

"To be a happy unwed mother, you have to have a good job that earns a lot of money. The woman will have to buy a house on her own and hire a nanny. She will also have to be strong-willed

and confident to withstand rumor-mongering and slander from her neighbors," Bing said.

"In China, there are very few women capable of this."

However, society seems to be slowly warming up to the idea of unwed mothers. In 2011, 67 percent of people surveyed supported the idea in Beijing and Shanghai, according to a poll by *Beijing Evening News*.

Many women who have been passed over for marriage said they may consider artificial insemination or a one-night stand when they decide to become mothers. Currently, artificial insemination is only legal in Jilin Province.

"Unmarried mothers are more common in developed countries, because people there are less inclined to judge others based on their lifestyles," said Li Yinhe, a sexologist.

"But even in foreign countries, getting that freedom has been a long process. Tolerance in our country will depend on time and a group of determined, wealthy women."

"With enough economic support and a powerful heart, I think many women who have been passed over for marriage will choose to have a child," Bing said.

Bing did, and her own story was the basis for Mei Yangyang.



Make China happy?

Multinational enterprises ponder new expansion strategy

While cheap labor and a massive number of consumers can still lure foreign investors to do business in China, many are realizing that jumping into the deep end can be a short-sighted approach.

It is now clearer than ever that a "me first" approach to expanding to China is far from enough, warned *The Daily Telegraph* to those looking to crack the world's second biggest market.

As China enhances its social governance in its 12th Five-Year Plan, foreign investors doing business should also consider doing their bit for the country and making Chinese people happy.

The London-based newspaper suggested multinational enterprises should do more in corporate social responsibility, such as helping the country clean up the environment, improve public health and broaden poor children's access to computers and get into universities.

Smart companies should involve itself in local charity work. "Social responsibility isn't part of your business strategy for China, it is your business strategy," said Clare Pearson, a lawyer specializing in corporate social responsibility.

(Agencies)



Local citizens take up the national flag during a laughing campaign to celebrate National Day.

IC Photo

The third eye How to make Chinese people happy

By Huang Daohen

What would make an ordinary Chinese person happy? This question would have been easy to answer in the 1970s.

At that time, when the country's per capita GDP was only 1,900 yuan, a warm bed and a piece of bread would be enough, to say nothing of bicycles, TVs and refrigerators.

But 30 years later, as the country has overtaken Japan as the world's second largest economy and the per capita GDP is now about 20,000 yuan, people have come to expect more.

Once an individual's material needs are met, further consumption actually provides less happiness, said Zhao Xiao, a local economics professor. "For a nation, it is the same."

Zhao said Chinese people's dreams for a better life have indeed driven the country's economic miracle. But once the subsistence is provided, further GDP growth doesn't necessarily equate to more happiness.

Therefore, more effort should be made to take care of citizens' sociological and psychological

needs. Zhao said that is the reason the central government has put more emphasis on people's happiness in its latest Five-Year Plan, which will run until 2015.

Zhao said Guangdong Province set an example when it passed a "Happy Guangdong" plan earlier this year. In the proposal, the local government aimed to achieve a happy Guangdong by moving away from GDP-focused development and trying to improve innovation, workforce development and green development.

It is clear that some well-to-do

Chinese people have come to realize that a GDP-first strategy has its limits. "A happy society is not simply a rich one: it also needs a clean and green environment, secure civil rights, social justice and more access to cultural works," Zhao said.

Zhao said that implications are worth considering not only for the government, but also important for companies both from home and abroad. "It is not simply corporate social responsibility, it means trying to do something for the country and people," he said.

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War for stomach shares

McDonald's new franchise move heats up fast food market



McDonald's China hopes its new franchise arrangement can keep it ahead of other brands.

Yin Aidi/IC Photo

By Chu Meng

McDonald's launched its new franchise business model in Yunnan Province last week. The move has been seen as an ambitious strategy to localize and expand the successful chain store.

Vice President Ren Jianmei of Kunming-based North Star Enterprise, a company with real estate and jewelry holdings, signed the first developmental franchise agreement with McDonald's last Tuesday.

China is the only market in the world where McDonald's maintains direct restaurants, traditional franchises and developmental franchises at the same time.

Ren said his company's objective is to take over McDonald's existing 11 stores in Yunnan Province within the next 10 months, and to build 20 new stores during the next five years.

Wang Jianhui, director of McDonald's China's public affairs, said there are big differences between traditional and developmental franchises.

Traditional franchises are assigned to specific locations by McDonald's. The company selects the address, rents the store property from the landlord and leases it to the franchisee. The store equipment, furniture, decoration and renovation costs are paid by the franchisee. Contracts normally last for 20 years, and the franchisee pays a 4 percent franchise fee and 9 percent leasing fee.

Developmental franchises delegate much more power and freedom to the franchisee. McDonald's grants the right to the local franchisee to take over all stores in a specific area, and to own and operate their own new stores in that area.

In this mode, McDonald's has no role outside employee training, Wang said.

"A certain proportion of the total turnover will be paid as a franchising fee, but that amount is being kept a secret," Wang said.

McDonald's has been using the developmental franchise model for 30 years. All contracts

are signed for 30 year periods, making the business relationship something like a marriage, Wang said.

Experts said the move indicated the chain's intent to maximize profits.

Zhu Fang, a researcher at the China Chain Store and Franchise Association, said that McDonald's is making constant efforts to review the ownership structure of the market to tap more business opportunities in China.

"This has been tested to be a successful franchise model in McDonald's worldwide operations. But any franchisee is required to have 30 to 50 years of independent business experience. It has frustrated most Chinese candidates," Zhu said.

"In the following two decades, this will become an important driver of McDonald's business in the country."

According to the speech given by Kenneth Chan, McDonald's China's new CEO, the chain is also opening more traditionally franchised stores throughout the inland provinces.

The first batch of nine traditional franchisees from Jiangsu Province received licenses in October. Candidate selection is underway in Hunan Province.

However, Chan said franchises are not being planned in first- and second-tier cities and coastal regions, where direct stores have been successful. His plan is to expand from the current 1,300 restaurants to 2,000 in China by the end of 2013.

Globally, more than 80 percent of McDonald's 33,000 stores are run by franchisees.

In China, however, the group only has six conventional franchised outlets and runs the other 1,300 stores itself. Under the developmental license, McDonald's will collect a royalty based on restaurant sales.

Zhu said that McDonald's is trying to catch up to KFC, its major rival owned by Yum! Brands. The competing chain operates 3,000 restaurants in China.

Yum! is currently negotiating the buyout of Little Sheep, China's most successful hotpot chain.

Analysis

Fast food battle calls for domestic players

By Huang Daohen

To veteran analyst Wen Yijun, McDonald's new efforts to loosen its ownership structure in China is a clear signal that the battle for the country's fast food market is heating up.

It is actually a battle for stomach share, said Wen, who works at Oriental Securities in Beijing. Though fast food can be unhealthy for the body, it is very healthy for one's profits.

More Chinese consumers, especially young workers with no time to cook, are buying fast food, Wen said.

Statistics show that in 2009, the food service market in China reached about 2 trillion yuan, and it is forecast to grow to 3 trillion yuan by 2015.

Overseas fast food giants, such as KFC and McDonald's, have dominated the market for quick service. Ask a Chinese consumer if he or she likes McDonald's, KFC or Pizza Hut, and you'll probably get a surprising response: "Yes, I eat it because it is safer and healthier."

Though unbelievable, Wen said Chinese consumers, young and old, are flocking to fast food

brands mentioned above, all in the name of food safety and health.

That is why domestic fast food chains are losing the battle, Wen said. "People have no confidence in them as they lack standardization."

Wen said Honggaoliang, one of the first Chinese fast food chains in the country, is an example. The local Chinese fast food chain became famous in the 1990s and aimed to challenge McDonald's. It expanded fast and within two years it opened up more than 100 stores in the country's major cities.

However, a lack of funding and poor management led Honggaoliang to develop quality problems. In 1998, the chain collapsed.

That wasn't the only failure. The retreat of Zhengongfu, a listed Chinese fast food chain in Shanghai, also proved attention-grabbing.

Wen blamed a lack of standardization for domestic chains' failure. They failed to standardize services and employee conduct, which finally led to uneven quality within the individual stores, and customers lost confidence.

Market watch

Why did Sina buy into Tudou?

By Huang Daohen

The Internet market is a never-ending battle. How can a Web portal expect to stand out in 2012 or beyond?

Sina, one of the country's leading Web operators, gave its answer this week.

The company, owner of Weibo, announced this week that it paid \$66.4 million (424 million yuan) for a 9.05 percent stake in Tudou, Xinhua reported.

Tudou, the country's second-largest streaming video website, became listed on the Nasdaq stock exchange in August, raising about \$174 million. The website offers licensed television and a mix of movies and user-contributed videos.

Sina's move came after rumors that Tencent, parent of QQ and Sina's biggest competitor, set its sights on the leading video website Youku, which also raised \$202 million in its Nasdaq debut last December.

"It's actually like a war being played out through video websites between two major Internet operators," said Ran Wong, analyst with strategy consultants Roland Berger.

For Sina and Tencent, online video services may be the next big thing for the development of their microblogs. Tencent launched last year its own microblog, Tencent Weibo.

Videos can become online products to join the microblog services. "And that's why they are moving into online video services," Wong said.

Sina said it would invest as much as \$100 million to further develop its Weibo service.

Tudou has said it will remain independent, but Wong believes the company will eventually operate as Sina's video platform, since video services only make up a small portion of Sina's business.

Sina has only 3.1 percent of the local online video market by revenue, according to Bloomberg news.

As of press time, Tencent could not be reached for comment about its plans for Youku.

In its fiscal year report, the company said it is ready to spend on a massive nationwide content delivery network and on creating and buying original licensed content, including dramas, reality contests, business and entertainment.

"With Sina starting to buy and Tencent eyeing to build, the war for Chinese video services is beginning," Wong said.

Besides, Wong said Sohu, the country's next biggest portal, is by no means out of the war. The company adopted a slightly different tactic by obtaining exclusive network copyrights.

Meanwhile, Xunlei, a Shenzhen-based video service backed by Wendi Deng Murdoch, also plans its Nasdaq IPO in the near future, which Wong believes will fuel the video battle.

Sex education still taboo

By Huang Daohen

Many parents feel embarrassed when kids ask them about sex. But would a graphic sex education textbook help?

A recent textbook for students in the city has generated controversy for its explicit descriptions and graphic illustrations.

For instance, an excerpt from the textbook *Steps Toward Maturity* reads: "Dad inserts his penis inside mom and shoots his sperm fiercely into mom's vagina." It also features cartoon-like illustrations.

According to *Beijing Daily*, the textbook might be used in the capital's primary schools.

The city's education authority, however, has denied the report's claim.

Parents are divided over the textbook. While some say it's not suitable, many others believe it is necessary to have it as a tool for sex education.



Students in Beijing attend a sex education class at a local primary school in Chaoyang District.

CFP Photo

Comment

Kids will find out eventually

I have no idea how schools carry out sex education now, but when I was young, teachers never talked about sex and we didn't have sex education classes. Still, boys would find ways to learn about sex and girls were probably very much the same. It's human nature that sooner or later, you'll find it out.

— Zhang Wei,
28, IT engineer

A good book

This daring textbook is actually very good and funny. It absorbs the essence of both foreign sex education teaching

materials and traditional Chinese culture. I think it can be a guide book for students.

— Gary Minter, 56,
visiting American scholar

An appropriate textbook

I think an appropriate textbook on sex education will surely help children. My 11-year-old boy's school didn't have any sex education class, so when he got older he became shy and stopped asking questions about sex. He would blush around girls.

But I think the descriptions in this booklet are a bit too graphic. It may be OK for 12-year-old students, but you just cannot

describe sex in such direct ways for younger children.

— Huang Shengwen,
father of an 11-year-old boy

Parents matter

Schools have health class, but I think the problem is that parents are too embarrassed to talk about sex. What's worse is some think their not talking about it is, in a way, protecting their kids. Some think if the children do not know about sex, they won't worry about it. But a lack of sex education has led to many terrible consequences.

— Sun Ping,
36, high school teacher

Survey

Young people going online for sex education

The Internet isn't just porn. Most of the country's young people are learning about sex education online, according to a survey by QQ.

More than 80 percent of respondents said they use the Internet to learn about sex.

About 65 percent choose books, while 30 percent turn to other media like newspa-

pers and TV.

But schools and parents were the last choice, accounting for 20 percent and 15 percent, respectively, the report said.

The survey polled 2,000 respondents, and among them, 40 percent were born in the 1980s, 48 percent in the 1990s and 10 percent in the 1970s.

Mooncake and wife taxes?



Many say the mooncake tax is a terribly misguided policy.

Dong Naide/IC Photo

By Yao Weijie

Tax authorities recently reminded employers that mooncakes given to employees should be included in the calculation of employees' tax dues. In fact, all kinds of allowances should be included as personal income and taxed accordingly.

The tax bureau reminded

people that a 3 to 4 percent tax applies to a second owner being added to a purchased property. This applies to houses that are bought by parents but registered under a child's name. When that child gets married, the spouse sometimes registers his or her name.

Netizens have dubbed this the

"wife tax."

The "mooncake tax" and "wife tax" have become buzz phrases on the Internet. Nearly 96 percent of respondents to a poll on Sina Weibo said the tax should not be imposed on mooncakes. Most people consider these two taxes outrageous and unreasonable.

Comment

Double taxation

This is unreasonable. Paying taxes for mooncakes is double taxation, because when companies buy the mooncakes, they paid sales tax. Why should employees then get taxed? This is just another tax burden for the public.

— Yin Yixing, government official

A way to avoid the mooncake tax

I have studied the tax law and discovered that if your company follows the following five steps, you don't need to pay the mooncake tax. First, the company sets up a cafeteria. Second, the cafeteria buys the mooncakes as a raw material. Third, the cafeteria offers mooncakes for lunch. Four, employees get mooncakes from the cafeteria. Five, the company dissolves the cafeteria.

— Zhang Quanling,
TV host

Focus on companies that are real tax evaders

I think the tax bureau should really pay attention to companies that intentionally evade important tax laws, not ordinary people who early just 3,000 to 4,000 yuan per month.

— Deng Yujing, reporter

Will stop eating mooncakes

I don't like to eat mooncakes. Every year when I get mooncakes from my company, I re-gift them to friends. Why should I pay taxes for things I don't like? I'd rather not receive mooncakes if I have to pay taxes on them.

Mooncakes are different from other allowances because they are a symbol of gratitude from employers. After being taxable, the meaning of the mooncakes will have completely changed.

— Dai Siqing, IT worker

Egyptian 'reliable brother' seeks more than fleeting fame

By Han Manman

An Egyptian man named Mohamed Osama achieved overnight fame in China after participating in a popular TV dating show a few days ago.

A Chinese language major, Osama said his dream was to become a famous TV host in this country. His recent exposure may help him achieve his goal.

Sorry, you are not the one

Wearing a T-shirt with the Chinese characters "Kao Pu" – or "reliable" – 23-year-old Osama was the first African to participate in China's most-watched TV dating show *If You Are the One*.

Unfortunately, he was refused by all 24 female contestants on stage. The reason was because he presented a taped segment in which two beautiful Italian women he had met just three days earlier at a nightclub introduced him to the contestants.

"I understand the contestants may have thought of me as a playboy and not steady, but I don't regret my choice," he said. "Those two Italian women are my friends."

Osama said the show's director suggested he invite male friends for the segment, but he refused. "I don't want to ask someone to pretend to be one of my friends," he said.

Although Osama failed to find Ms. Right, he still made an impression on Chinese viewers.

"Many people called me 'reliable brother' when they recognized me on the street," Osama said, laughing, adding that he loves the title because he thinks he's a reliable guy.

In a week, he received more than 4,000 letters from Chinese women who want to be friends with him.

"But I don't have feelings for any of them," he said.

Finding a girlfriend, actually, was a secondary goal for his participation in the dating show. His first objective was to make himself attractive to potential Chinese employers.

"I got some opportunities after the show, but nothing ideal," he said, adding that he is currently teaching Arabic in Beijing and hopes to get a better job in the future.



A ticket to Beijing was Osama's reward for translating for a Hong Kong-based news group in Cairo. Photos provided by Mohamed Osama



Many people now call Osama "reliable brother."

Osama's dream is to become a TV host in China.

One year as a soldier

Before coming to Beijing, Osama spent a year in the Egyptian military. That year turned out to be the most unforgettable in his life.

After graduating from Cairo University, he joined the Egyptian infantry last May.

"Before I became a soldier, I was an epicurean who liked to drink coffee and go boating with friends, but life in the military changed me in some sense," he said, adding that in the past year he's witnessed a historical moment in his country.

It started January 25 when millions of people rose up against Hosni Mubarak's regime in Cairo.

Osama said he was deployed to protect civilians from rioters and

ensure that violence didn't erupt.

"The situation that day was very dangerous. Some rioters tried to shoot me, and my bullets struck two rioters' legs," Osama said, adding that it was the first time in his life that he opened fire on people.

"But I'm so proud that I protected the Egyptians," he said.

"When I'm old, I will tell my grandson what happened in Egypt in 2011. I will tell him proudly that his grandfather participated in this revolution that changed all of Egypt," he said.

A presidential election is expected in Egypt in November. It will be the second presidential election in Egyptian history, following the 2005 election. Before

then, Mubarak had been president since 1981. He was forced to resign in February.

"I will definitely vote in this election, even if I have to fly back to Egypt," Osama said.

"This is the first time that the Egyptian people has had a real vote, so I really cherish the opportunity," he said. "Though Egypt is still changing, I believe that one day the country will have a much brighter future."

In June, after he completed his military service, a Hong Kong-based news group went to Cairo to film a video about the revolution and asked Osama to be their translator for a month.

"I asked them to buy me a ticket to Beijing as my reward," he said.

A new life

After just two months in Beijing, Osama felt comfortable, partly because of his time spent as a tour guide for Chinese tourists when he was in college.

As a guide, he got to meet Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and introduce his country at the Chinese Cultural Center in Cairo. When leading Chinese groups, he would practice different dialects of Chinese with them.

Osama said speaking Chinese was one of his hobbies in Egypt, where he loved involving himself in the Chinese community.

"My father hoped I'd be an engineer like him, but I just wanted to study Chinese and work in China doing something related with the language," he said, adding that the language,

in fact, is getting more popular among young Egyptians.

But Osama readily admits life in China is tougher than it is back home.

"In Cairo, the pace of life is much slower, but here in Beijing everything is so fast and competition is severe," he said.

He's up for the challenge, though.

"I will not go back to Egypt until I prove my ability here," he said.

Osama's dream is to become a well-known TV host in China so that more people here know about Egypt and its culture.

"I know that achieving this goal will be really hard," he said. "I need to work hard to get more qualified. But I will try."



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Hui Ling charity dinner next Friday welcomes all



Beijing Hui Ling, a community service for people with learning disabilities, will host its annual sports day in two weeks.

Photo provided by Beijing Hui Ling

By Annie Wei

Among Beijing's thousands of NGOs, Beijing Hui Ling (BJHL), a community service for people with learning disabilities, has been a pioneer for 11 years.

Hui Ling was co-founded in 1990 in Guangzhou by Meng Weina and a British woman, Jane Pierini. BJHL has become a well-known NGO among the expat community, with many volunteers. It has 12 locations all over China.

"As part of the 11th anniversary of BJHL, we're planning a series of activities," said Cassie Liu, manager of the Three Primary Colors Workshop of BJHL.

BJHL aims not only to provide community services to adults over the age of 16 – called "trainees" – but also help them earn an income and ensure that they can

continue to take part in BJHL's activities.

BJHL has a workshop and three residential center caring for 60 trainees in the city. Every year, about a fifth of the people they help come from low-income or struggling families.

The goal of an upcoming charity dinner is to raise money to help two people from poor families who need urgent support.

The two-hour dinner, provided by Xuxiangzhai Vegetarian Restaurant, will start at 7 pm next Friday. All funds will go to BJHL directly.

A week after that, BJHL will hold its annual sports day.

Liu said the sports day was not a fund-raising event, but rather a chance for trainees to participate in sports and interact

with volunteers.

About 70 trainees will be present. BJHL needs 30 more volunteers, as the organization currently only has 10 regular volunteers.

The venue and date are unconfirmed, but the group is planning on September 16 at Dongdan Tiyyuguan.

For more information, please contact Liu at 6404 6631 or visit huijing.org.cn.

Hui Ling charity dinner

Where: Xuxiangzhai Vegetarian Restaurant, 110 Yanyue Hutong, Dongsi Nan Jie, Dongcheng District

When: September 9, 7-9 pm

Tel: 6404 6631

Cost: 150 yuan per person (the dinner is planned for 40 people)

Event

Board games

Starting next Tuesday, a gaming group is meeting to play classic board games such as Monopoly, Risk, Pictionary, Pandemic, The Settlers of Catan, Carcassonne, Lost Cities, Squares, Scrabble, Bang and more.

Where: Bei Luo Cafe and Bar, 70 Beiluogu Xiang, Dongcheng District

When: Every Tuesday starting September 6-27, 5 pm – 2 am

Email: beiluocafe@gmail.com

Cost: Free

Netball every Wednesday

Come check out free netball sessions every Wednesday. Netball is a fun and basketball-like sport that requires jumping, running and hand-eye coordination.

Where: Harrow International School Beijing, Upper School, No. 5, 4th Block, Anzhen Xi Li, Olympic Area

When: 7:30 pm – 9 pm, every Wednesday

Email: enquiries@harrowbeijing.cn

Cost: Free

Acupressure class for parents and children

Acupressure focuses on the gentle massage of certain points to relieve pain and promote general health. Unlike acupuncture, it uses simple, safe household items.

Where: The Familier Center, Building A-0753, Chaowai SOHO, Chaoyang District

When: September 6, 10:30-11:30 am

Tel: 5866 2904

Cost: 100 yuan (for parent and child)

(By Wei Xi)

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Tips for hailing a taxi



Local authorities are punishing taxis that refuse to take passengers to their destinations.

CFP Photo

By Yao Weijie

In reaction to increasing complaints about taxis, the Beijing Transportation Bureau decided to take action to improve the situation on Tuesday.

The new regulations encourage drivers to work despite bad weather and during holidays, and to avoid changing shifts during rush hour. Companies that break such regulations will be severely punished.

"After the car purchase restriction was implemented, the demand for taxis has increased, but the supply has not," said Dai Cheng, a teacher from Dabao driving school. "The taxi market is now a seller's market, so drivers are being picky."

Other reasons have contributed to the difficulty in getting a taxi.

"The price of gas and the cost of living have increased, while the money every driver has to pay their company hasn't gone down and their salaries haven't gone

up," said Zhang Jian, a driver. "Working 12 hours every day, I get no more than 4,000 yuan per month. I cannot make enough money to not be picky with passengers."

Zhang said drivers can earn more than 6,000 yuan per month only if they work both days and nights, which is bad for health and poor for safety.

"I won't go to the airport and train station. You have to queue for at least an hour. And if you do that and get a passenger who only wants to go someplace that's a 10-yuan ride away ... no driver wants to do that."

"Only by emphasizing self-discipline and punishing those who don't follow regulations can these problems be solved," said Zhou Peiyun, a lawyer from Haitian Law Firm. "Taxi management reform is necessary."

But the process isn't expected to be quick. For the time being, here's some advice:

1. Try to avoid hailing taxis during rush

hour, from 4 to 7 pm.

2. Walk away from places where lots of people are competing to get cabs. You can usually grab cabs near the gates of hospitals, schools, commercial office buildings, hotels and restaurants, supermarkets and large bus stations.

3. Tell your driver your destination only after you've entered the cab.

4. If a cab driver smokes, makes unnecessary detours, fails to use his meter, refuses to give receipts or doesn't turn on air conditioning upon request, you can lodge a complaint by dialing 96520.

5. Check a map before you enter a taxi and negotiate the route you want drivers to take.

6. It is good to remember your taxi's license plate, company, and driver's supervision number in case you lose something and need to get it back.

7. You can dial 96103 to call a taxi.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to:
weiyang@ynet.com

Where are the good places I can go in Beijing to purchase gold?

The best places to buy gold, both bars and jewelry, are Caishikou Department Store and Guohua Department Store, as recommended by a long-time Beijinger. Both of these are state-run stores where most locals go to buy gold. If you want to invest in collectible coins, then Caishikou Department Store is the best place, but its gold bars are a bit expensive.

Dazhongsi Gold Store is also a good choice and the cheapest of the three. However, it might not have gold coins and statues like Caishikou Department Store does.

Caishikou Department Store: 306 Guangnei Dajie, Xuanwu District

Guohua Department Store: 18 Xuanwumen Xi Dajie, Xuanwu District

Dazhongsi Gold Store: a few minutes walk from the Dazhongsi subway station on Line 13

I plan to go to Beijing for a week to visit some friends who are exchange students. How much money should I take with me, not including flight and hotel costs? I plan to visit some typical tourist places, go shopping and get some souvenirs for my families, as well as hit up some nice clubs near Houhai or Sanlitun.

Most tickets for tourist destinations cost less than 100 yuan. If you'd like to do some shopping, bring some extra - maybe 2,000 yuan for the week. Nightclub cover charges rarely exceed 50 yuan, and it costs maybe 150 to 200 yuan for three or four reasonably good drinks. The most that a pint of Yanjing or Tsingtao beer would cost, however, is about 20 yuan. Plan for 5,000 yuan. You can withdraw cash from any ATM here.

(By Wei Xi)

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By Zhang Dongya

1999 was the year the world discovered Lang Lang. The pianist debuted at Ravinia Festival's "Gala of the Century," where he was selected as a last-minute substitute for an indisposed pianist. He played Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Today, the pianist is world famous for his achievements both on and off the piano.



“ I hope I can make new achievements in art, education and philanthropy each year. I hope every year could be titled ‘The Year of Lang Lang.’ ”

Lang Lang brings classical music to the people. His latest album was released to much fanfare at a local shopping mall.

Photos provided by Sony Music Entertainment (China)

‘The year of Lang Lang’



Lang Lang is an icon for the Chinese people. At his performance to celebrate his new album, *Liszt, My Piano Hero*, at Beijing Viva Plaza, people came early to crowd around the stage in the center of the mall. Soon the crowd spilled onto the upper floors as Lang Lang began.

The new album is a personal tribute to Hungarian composer and pianist Franz Liszt (1811-1886) for the bicentennial of his birth.

Lang said his first encounter with the composer was at the age of two, when he watched Paganini and Jerry Garcia perform Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2."

The album features 11 pieces, including Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2," which was a new recording of "Piano Concerto No. 1," accompanied by the Vienna Philharmonic led by Russian conductor Valery Gergiev.

The new album was the top-ranked classical albums in Europe within a week. His first album, *Live in Vienna*, has won Germany Echo Award for "Bestseller of the Year."

At the release, the announcer dubbed 2011 "The Year of Lang Lang."

Lang was not informed about the ceremony in advance, and he called it a "surprise."

"If others are calling this the 'Lang Lang Piano Era,' I take it as a kind of encouragement," Lang said. "But I hope I can make new achievements in art, education and philanthropy each year. I hope every year could be titled 'The Year of Lang Lang.'"

Lang, born in 1982, is 30 years old according to the traditional way of counting one's age. It is considered a watershed year in one's life.

In music, 2011 was an important year for Lang Lang. Lang joined Universal Music in 2009. It marked his first time as a solo artist. When asked about his new album last year, he said, "I need to have some changes," said Sun Jinyao, associate director of public affairs and the head of Sony's classical music division.

"If we say his 20s were a time of creativity, vitality and bravery, then his 30s will be a time of maturity. It will be a turning point, which will be reflected in his music and in his career," Sun said.

On August 8, Lang Lang's Music World, the first musical school to bear his name, opened in Shenzhen. It combines piano education, master classes, concerts and piano competitions to cultivate more young pianists with Lang's influence.

Lang founded the International Music Foundation in 2008 to aid talented young pianists in countries such as it has visited New York and Hamburg.

"The purpose is to popularize classical music with the younger generation and to bring young people closer to classical music and other refined arts," Lang said. "Also, I want to offer art education to children in impoverished regions and disaster areas. I hope it will help needy children discover classical music and learn it."

Many parents took their children to the release event to hear Lang play piano. Two children, ages 6 and 7, were selected over Tencent Weibo to play piano with Lang.

"Many people know nothing about classical music. They just recognize him as a public icon. The good part is that it still helps more people to learn about the piano and Liszt," Sun said.

Lang has also been trying to combine classical music and high-tech productions.

Last year, he mixed the music for the most recent *Grand Turismo* title on the PlayStation 3. The 11 episodes of the game have background music selected from Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1," Chopin's "Etude in E Major Op. 10 No. 3" and Bach's "Air on the G String."

"Most of these ideas were raised by Lang, and our job was to help him realize them," Sun said. "Young people don't go to the symphony or the opera, but Lang found another way to reach them through games and animation."

Another new trial, a 3D film called *The Flying Machine*, played at the Forbidden City Concert Hall last Tuesday. The film, produced in cooperation with Break-Through, is a 3D animated film about the life of Polish pianist Chopin last year.

Lang said he plays 120 concerts per year. When he isn't performing, he is creating new albums and teaching young pianists. He plays piano at least two hours every day.

He still values practice, and considers a strict upbringing essential to success. When asked for advice by the young pianists who played piano on his stage, Lang replied, "Practice more."

"I consider it a great honor to help so many children take an interest in classical music," he said.



Literature a venue for women's voice

By Wei Xi

People often make special mention when a book is written by a female writer, but why doesn't anyone mention when one is written by a male writer?

Jeanette Winterson, a British novelist, says that writing changes the way we think and the way we live, and changes women's position in society.

Women experience the world differently than men. However, most books are still written from a male perspective – even when a male casts a female protagonist. Winterson hopes her work can help restore a balance.

Winterson writes about reality, history and fantasy, which she says has the power to change the world. "If we can imagine it, we can change reality," she said.

Books are doors, she says, and when we open a book we are entering a new world.

And for women, reading books by female authors broadens their horizons.

Although most of Winterson's books, such as *Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*, *Sexing the Cherry* and *Written on the Body*, focus on female topics, she does not see herself as writing only for women.

"We can't be trapped or stereotyped. We need to be ourselves," she says.

Susie Orbach, another guest speaker at the book talk last weekend, agreed that writing is essential to giving women a voice.

Orbach, a British psychological therapist and writer, says the origin of men and women's different thinking begins at birth. Most parents wonder three things about their new child: is it healthy, how much does it weigh and is it a boy or a girl?

"Why do we care so much about the baby's gender? Because otherwise we would not know how to treat it," Orbach says.

She says that baby boys are usually fed more often and potty trained at a later age.

"Boys are taught to enjoy rather than how to care for things immediately after they are born," she says. But men and women have similarities as well. "They (men) also cry, and feel weak."

Li Yinhe, the only Chinese speaker, spoke about China's gender inequality.

While doing an interview for one of her books in Hebei Province, Li learned that local village girls had less access to education than boys and that their status in the family was exceptionally low.

"When a guest comes to visit, girls and women are not allowed to enter the dining hall and eat with the guests," Li says. "Even when a woman is the real manager of a company and deals with all the business, she has to teach her husband how to treat the issue and let her husband show up and pretend to talk about business when customers come."

Even if it is not hard to understand discrimination at the hands of men, women who discriminate against other women remain an enigma.

"It may be because some women, once in a high position, are afraid to be regarded as female, which they equate with weakness," Li says. "They discriminate against other females as a way of proving their strength."

For China to have gender balance, women will have to take the lead and stop looking down on and discriminating against themselves, she says.



Jeanette Winterson

Photo by Wei Xi

The annals of Xinhai

By Zhang Dongya

When Spring Festival came in 1911, few realized they were on the eve of the end of the feudal era.

"In that year, everyone's destination would be decided by the grand history," Zhu Yong writes in the foreword of *Xinhai Year*.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Xinhai Revolution, a moment that changed China forever.

In compiling a history of the year, Zhu began with the year's Spring Festival and ended on Chinese New Year's Eve, narrating changes in the lives of big names and nobodies over 300 days and nights.

"It is an easy way to see the complicated situation of the Xinhai Revolution," he says. "If it was the invention of Ray Huang (a Chinese historian), we should thank him, for he offered a shortcut to enter into the jungle of its story."

To grasp the climate of that fateful year, Zhu relied heavily on newspapers. Beijing's local media covered the daily developments in the Wuchang Uprising, and published the original memorial of the imperial court.

"His books do not focus on big names like Sun Yat-sen and Liang Qichao, but unnamed fellows. Everyone participated in the Xinhai Revolution, and each person experienced that year of revolution in



Xinhai Year
By Zhu Yong, 362pp, Sanlian Bookstore, 35 yuan

his own way," Zhang He, Zhu's editor, says.

To Zhu, a history that fails to focus on the common people is impotent and cold. He says past research focused too much on the revolutionary party and not enough on those people connected to the empire.

He tries to balance in ink all the players in the event to create a complete picture of the Xinhai Revolution.

"It is a popular way to explore history, but it is the one that most connects with readers and makes them think," says Huang Xingtao, deputy director of The Institute of Qing History in Renmin University of

China. "[Zhu] did some thinking on the constitutionalists, for example, how Yuan Shikai understood the republic, which helps clarify their role in history."

The book emphasizes interesting phenomenon at that time, including emerging concepts such as philosophy, republicanism and constitutionalism.

Zhu says all history is contemporary history, and that he hopes his book helps capture the climate of the revolution.

The book originated as a documentary called *Xinhai* that was produced in cooperation with Beijing TV. The special is scheduled to air later this month.

Xinhai Year follows Zhu's *Blood Court*, a historical fiction published in May.

CNPIEC Bookstore book listing

The China National Publication Import and Export Corporation's (CNPIEC) bookstore recommends these new arrivals to *Beijing Today* readers.

Bunny Williams' Scrapbook for Living

By Bunny Williams, 224pp, Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 439 yuan

Bunny Williams is famous for her glamorous design and attention to detail in her clients' homes. She takes the reader through several homes, room by room, showing creative ways to organize and add personal touches. From dining rooms to lighting and pets, she empowers the reader with her practical and inspiring tips for making a house a home.

Thin, Rich, Pretty

By Beth Harbison, 368pp, Griffin, 105 yuan

Twenty years ago, when they were teenagers, Holly and Nicola were the outsiders at summer camp. Holly was the plump one, a dreamer who longed to be an artist. Nicola was the shy, plain one who wanted nothing more than to be beautiful. Their cabin nemesis was Lexi, rich, spoiled and evil. One night, Holly and Nicola team up to pull one, daring act of vengeance. But they never dream that this one act will have repercussions that will reach into the future, even 20 years later. And they never realize the secret pain that Lexi holds very close, and how their need for revenge costs Lexi much.

Italian Mosaics: 300-1300

By Joachim Poeschke, 432pp, Abbeville Press, 1,050 yuan

This book is the first comprehensive and well-researched overview of the many examples of the art that still survive. This volume focuses on early Christian and medieval mosaics in Italy. Each of 19 chapters offers a descriptive and interpretive essay on all aspects of mosaics covering the artists and their patrons in the context of their cultural and political history.

(By He Jianwei)



A life steeped in cartoons

By He Jianwei

From his first sketch on a magnetic board to his canvas creations, Jin Haofan has never stopped drawing cartoons.

His first solo exhibition, *Whom to Please*, opens September 10 at Line Gallery and includes oil paintings and animations created from his college years to the present.

Jin Haofan looks like a typical good boy: his clothes are neat and clean, and he speaks gently and quietly.

But his school years were a time absent of praise.

"I always felt like I was being neglected as a child," Jin says.

"My father neither praised nor criticized me. Maybe painting was my way to get his attention."

Born in 1987 in a small town in Guangdong Province, he was always compared with the children of his parents' friends – most of whom were top students. His parents seldom praised him to his face, but he knew they complimented him in front of their relatives and friends.

His first drawing was a picture of Son Goku, the hero of the Japanese comic *Dragon Ball*, on an erasable magnetic drawing board. "When my father bought me that board as a toy, I could not stop drawing," he says.

To be a cartoonist was his childhood dream. From primary school to high school, he thought up superpowers for his imagined heroes. "But I was no good at writing. My plots always sounded stupid, like Superman arriving on our planet and encountering his love interest," he says.

In the second year of middle school, the students were separated based on their inclinations toward liberal arts or the sciences. In order to enter a better university, he decided to go to a school for fine arts, because they required lower academic scores.

Although he had 10 years of painting experience, he quickly found himself targeted for disciplinary action.

"It was a torturous experience," he says. "My teacher said I had 'bad habits,' because I could not draw straight lines. My cartoon images were always composed of curves," he says.

He took six months off to attend the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, where he took special prep courses. "They saw training as a process of 'purification,'" he says.

Half a year later, he was admitted as a student of oil painting at the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute.

During his first two years, he was not interested in oil painting, especially realistic painting. But cartoons were not considered acceptable by his professors. The first two years of college were long and painful.

When he took a course in video art, he rediscovered the joy of painting. He made an animation called *I Wanna Be* as his course assignment. It was less than two minutes long, but it was praised by his teacher and classmates.

"Drawing cartoons was a distraction in my teen years, but as an adult it could be a way to amuse others," he says. "I didn't have to waste much time thinking about what to draw, because cartoons had been part of my life for a long time." Whenever he picks up a brush, a cartoon image immediately pops into his head.

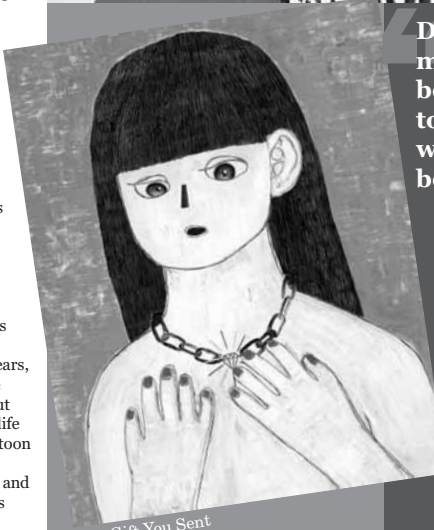
The characters in his paintings look dissatisfied with and mocking of reality. Despite attempts to please his friends and family, painting remains Jin's method of venting.

"Some people rag on my work – in their eyes, cartoons are another 'bad habit' – but such characters are burned in my memory," he says.

After graduating last year, Jin signed a contract with Line Gallery and went to Beijing to begin working as a professional artist.

"Neither my parents nor I thought I could make a living by selling paintings," he says. "My father opposed my decision at first because it's a tough life." Eventually, his father promised him five years of financial support.

Four of his paintings exhibited in a group exhibition at Line Gallery sold last year.



Drawing cartoons was a distraction in my teen years, but as an adult it could be a way to amuse others. I didn't have to waste much time thinking about what to draw, because cartoons had been part of my life for a long time."



Whom to Please – Jin Haofan Solo Exhibition

Where: Line Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: September 10 – October 5, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 5978 9916

Photos provided by Line Gallery



Small shop, cool stuff



Designer Anna Chan

By Annie Wei

Young city dwellers are caring more about the quality of designer goods, which is why the market has recently seen an influx of young designers with cool brands, to the benefit of all.

Indie designer with shoes to sell

Anna Chan, 27, inspired by a trip to China last year from the UK, quit her job as a stockbroker at Credit Suisse to pursue her dream of becoming a shoe designer.

She set up Just Anna Shoes and developed her brand so well that her shoes are made in Brazil and sold in 12 stores in the UK, as well as at justannashoes.com.

Chan hopes to open her own boutique in Shanghai in the near future, as entering the Chinese market is her passion and goal.

Although neither a fashion major nor a graduate of an art school, Chan has forged her own identity in a competitive industry.

"Fashion is not something you can learn," she said. "You must like it and dip into it."

Chan said she isn't trying to be like luxury brands Gucci, Prada or Chloe, but rather something like Victoria's Secret, providing basic and practical items. "What I want is to make shoes," she said. "My style is young and daring."

Chan's shoes start at 2,350 yuan per pair. The price, while high, still is lower than luxury shoes in the UK, like a pair of Christian Louboutin's that runs for 5,225 yuan. Chan said her shoes are for women who want designer luxury at affordable prices.

Chan is fussy about quality. She wants to make sure each pair comes out exactly as what she wants.

Website: justannashoes.com



Chan's shoes start at 2,350 yuan per pair
Photos provided by justannashoes.com



Monocle brings Nordic style "in"

Beijing is the third city to have a Monocle store after Tokyo and Hong Kong. As a known brand with magazine, Web, TV and retail divisions, Monocle products are considered essential for designers.

The new store is inside Royal Smushi House, a new Nordic restaurant and cafe. The store is only 15 square meters, selling products like Monocle magazines and its special *Monocle Mediterraneo* newspaper, as well as products developed with other companies, such as the The Hill-Side x Monocle tie (750 yuan) and pocket handkerchief (starting at 500 yuan), TEMBEA book tote (starting at 2,100 yuan), Barena x Monocle travel jacket (3,700 yuan), Hackett Polo shirt (starting at 1,100 yuan) and posters (starting at 510 yuan).

Monocle Beijing

Where: Southwest corner of the intersection between Sanlitun Bei Jie and Dongzhimen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Open: 7 am - 10 pm
Tel: 6416 9664

Monocle magazine is a must-have for many designers.



Inside the Monocle shop



The first Monocle shop in China is located at Sanlitun.

Photos by Superfuture

Gear up for Mid-Autumn Festival

By Annie Wei

Don't look now, but Mid-Autumn Festival is only 10 days away. If you haven't already, it's time to prepare those mooncakes and assorted goods for your house party, or solidify your holiday plans for dining out, perhaps heading to Houhai and watching the moon.

Cupcake-like mooncakes

Although mooncakes are indispensable during Mid-Autumn Festival, many people find them too filling and greasy. We recommend Piehouse's moon cakes made of black and white chocolate skin, with different mousse layers and in the shape of Chinese roses. Four flavors come in a box (299 yuan): cheese white chocolate, green tea, black chocolate and peanut, and raspberry.

Wang Liang, co-founder of Piehouse, said the inspiration came from a Chinese poem: the white chocolate cake symbolizes the moon, chocolate and peanut is a dark night, the sweet and sour raspberry represents a feeling of homesickness and yearning, and the green tea white chocolate is a happy moment with family and friends.

Piehouse's mooncakes are available until September 15. To order, visit piehouse.com.cn



Green tea mooncake from Piehouse
Photo provided by Wang Liang

Simple recipes from Michelin-star chef

Last Friday, Michel Portos, a two-star Michelin chef from Bordeaux, began offering a seven-course fine dinner at Ritz-Carlton Financial Street, and will continue doing so until tomorrow.

Portos is known for abandoning sauces in favor of delicately perfumed condiments of herbs and spices. His cuisine is global, sometimes borrowing from the Middle East, sometimes from Asia and often from the Mediterranean.

Portos recently shared two simple dishes that anyone can make. The inspiration for these recipes came from a trip to Japan and Hong Kong. The dishes reflect the area's people and their situations.

Grilled oyster appetizer

Grilled oyster with vermicelli and garlic is great during a hot night. Portos' version adds a twist, using apples, white radishes and zucchini to replace the strong flavor of garlic. "These vegetables are not strongly flavored or sour. Instead, for example, the green apple tastes light and will not take away the flavor of oyster," Portos said.

Ingredients:

Apple, white radish, zucchini, two fat oysters

Preparation:

1. Open the oysters and slightly grill them
2. Sit two clean, empty oyster shells on sea salt rocks
3. Finely chop apple, white radish and zucchini
4. Mix chopped vegetables and season them with lemon juice, Japanese soy sauce and peanut oil
5. Place the grilled oysters back into their shells and carefully fill with vegetables

Rice soup with duck liver – to warm up your stomach in the morning

This dish was inspired by the sight of people eating congee in the morning in Hong Kong.

Preparation:

1. Cook rice with sliced galangal
2. Add some hot water and blend
3. Add some Japanese rice vinegar, use a spoon to mix
4. Dice some red and white dragon fruit and place on top of rice congee
5. Dice duck liver, add some sesame sauce, put on top of congee
6. Finish with a few drops of sesame oil



Two-star Michelin chef Michel Portos



Grilled oyster



Rice soup with duck liver

Photos by Xiaobao

Wine pair for mooncake and crab

People who know a thing or two about wine realize that Chinese wines aren't yet reputable, but the country's booming wine market has resulted in many good wines imported here at reasonable prices.

Beijing Today spoke to Marc Fressange, CEO of Oh Marco Cellar Network, about pairing bottles with signature dishes.

Fressange grew up in a wine family, as his grandfather was from Bordeaux. His family has several vineyards in France, including in Bordeaux, Bergerac and Languedoc, and he has opened 25 outlets in China.

As his company only imports from family or estate vineyards, Fressange personally knows his winemakers, and his selection has earned him a good reputation among local wine lovers.

Fressange, who has lived in Beijing for five years, said you could pair wines with mooncakes, which aren't overly sweet because the Chinese prefer lighter tastes.

"Normally, sweetness reduces all other impressions, which is why a very sweet cake makes a sweet wine seem less so, unless a dessert wine is sweeter than the cake," Fressange said.

Fressange recommended two medium-sweet white wines: Chateau Talusson Blanc, 2009 Bordeaux AOC (158 yuan) and Riesling Marcel Hugg 2009, Alsace AOC (168 yuan).

Crabs and seafood are in season and are great dishes for

the holiday. Fressange recommends Chardonnay Emile Chandesais 2007, Chardonnay AOC, Burgundy White (296 yuan) and Chablis Emile Chandesais 2009, Chablis AOC, Burgundy White (532 yuan) to pair with seafood.

Chablis Emile Chandesais is a tender yellow one with

hints of lime-tree blossom, with white flower and fresh citrus and toasted notes, and hints of grapefruit and hazelnut. It goes well with shellfish, fish and quiche.

Chablis is shiny pale, with fruit aromas, well balanced between fruity and mineral scents. It is a lively and frank wine from the first sip, with fresh yellow fruits, linden flowers, honey and a flinty taste. You can try to pair it with fish, seafood, pates and poultry with white cream sauce.

The wines mentioned above are available at one of Oh Marco Cellar's many outlets, or via direct order at 5879 0210.

Oh Marco / Cafe du Centre

Institut Francais de l'Ambassade de France, Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

Open:

8 am – 8 pm

Tel : 6553 2627

Oh Marco Cellar Fortune Mall

7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 10 am – 8 pm

Oh Marco Jin Rong Jie (Oh Marco flagship store)

Where: 9 Jinchengfang Jie, Xicheng District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 6622 0566



Chateau Talusson Blanc, 158 yuan



Marc Fressange, CEO of Oh Marco Cellar Network

Photos provided by Oh Marco Cellar

Revels in a courtyard

By He Jianwei

Tonight, a white spotlight will shine on a patch of grass, lengthening the shadows of performers on the wall. Six bands will perform at a courtyard in Fangjia Hutong to open the third 789 Festival Young, a presentation of artists born after 1970.

The curator You Yang selected musicians of different styles, from folk to punk, pop to techno, but these performers share common characteristics: a critical spirit and willingness for self-examination.

Influenced by American bands Primus and Red Hot Chili Peppers, Lure is a five-person punk band founded in 1998.

With his typical punk haircut, lead singer and guitarist Lei Lin is a bad boy. Most of his lyrics are about sex and violence – the darkness of humanity – and are critical of social issues.

Born in the late 1970s, Lei was a rebellious teenager who started to learn guitar with his older brother when he was 15. At first, he wanted to make melodious music, but his rebelliousness expressed itself in his hard, angry playing.

In the band's last album, *Sweet Times*, released last

year, Lei writes, "When we could not speak out love, virginity went into the toilet; I gazed at the crazy world with wondering eyes; I felt depressed, then I smiled ... I dreamed Buddha's light, but it did not give me guide."

Lure has incorporated gothic and grunge influences into its music as well.

Like Lure, Exit A's songs are also blunt. Influenced by synthpop and industrial, it combines the piano and synthesizer in its music.

Many young Chinese rock bands prefer to write English lyrics, but Cao Yang, the lead of Exit A, insists on Chinese lyrics. He understands that some bands want to attract an international audience, but he believes it's only reasonable to use Chinese to tell stories of China.

As its name suggests, Exit A's music seeks an escape from reality.

In the album *The Opposite Direction*, Cao criticizes the loss of belief and ideals. "They run in opposite direc-



Exit A

tions further and further and have forgotten what they believe as they forgot themselves in those years; they run faster and faster on the road of vanity and have forgotten their ideals as revenge for being forgotten by their ideals."

And in "But You Did Not Say," Cao reveals the hypocrisy of human relations. "But you did not say, but you dare not say. What have you lost?" he sings in a despairing voice.

Unlike these two bands, folk singer Wang Shengnan cares more about individual attitudes toward life's pressures.

Born in the 1990s, Wang began humming melodies when she was just five years old. At 13, she wrote the song "Old Photo," in which she acknowledges that time flies and that people must forget unhappy memories.

At 15, she began learning guitar and four years later won a contract with a folk music label.

She says she is shy, but her songs reflect her maturity. In "The Lonely Fog," she writes, "I could pretend to be knowledgeable, or to be ignorant. Life makes us feel at ease under all circumstances."

The other three performers will be punk band Girl Kill Girl, DJ Zha Kexin and the folk duo Mark Peng and Mao Yige.



Wang Shengnan



Mark Peng and Mao Yige.



Girl Kill Girl

Listen to their music from the following websites:

Lure: site.douban.com/lure

Exit A: site.douban.com/exita

Wang Shengnan: site.douban.com/wangshengnan

Girl Kill Girl: site.douban.com/girlkillgirl

Zha Kexin: site.douban.com/zhazhaclub

Mark Peng and Mao Yige: site.douban.com/jesusloveyou

Break Through With Music

Where: Trainspotting Cafe and Bar, 46 Fangjia Hutong, Dongcheng District
When: September 2, 7 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6406 0658

Photos provided by 789 Festival Young

By Yao Weijie

Many rock musicians live hard lives while they chase their dreams: few become big names. To help musicians generate a following, photographer Chai Dongxin spent the last five years snapping photos of the city's top bands.

The breadth of his work has helped him achieve his own dream: a solo exhibition of his photojournalistic works at Bloom Gallery in 798 Art District.

To help Chai to record the big event, director Lü Hongfeng shot *The Adolescence of an Era*, a documentary about the stories behind the photos.

Chai Dongxin's passion for rock was ignited at the age of 16, when he heard a Spring Festival Eve radio program.

He was most fascinated by Zhang Chu's single "Sister," a folk rock tune that was wildly popular in the 1990s. After that, he began to obsessively collect information about Zhang and other Chinese rockers.

The obsession led Chai to Beijing, where he immersed himself in the capital's vibrant music scene.

Scrapped for cash, he stayed in a cheap flat in Tongzhou District, far from the urban city center and a hub for low-income people. He soon made friends with the area's many starving musicians.

He would watch his friends perform at live shows and bars throughout the week, snapping photos as often as he could.

Eventually, he became a photographer for the annual Midi Music and Strawberry Music festivals.

Dreams born in determination



His friends, who played in bands like Miserable Faith, Secondhand Rose, Twisted Machine and Brain Failure, have gone on to become big names.

"I knew them when they were nobodies and know what they've gone through to realize their dreams," Chai says. But Chai realized his dream too.

On June 5, Chai held his first solo exhibition – *The Adolescence of an Era: Chai Dongxin & Surface* – at Bloom Gallery in 798 Art Zone. The 107 photos included rock performances and candid, offstage moments with the performers.

"We think Chai considers this exhibition more important than his own marriage," says Lü Hongfeng, the director of the exhibition's documentary. "As his friend, I came to the exhibition on the opening day to shoot a documentary about it for him."

Lü Hongfeng has been interested in rock music since he was a teenager. After graduating from Beijing Film Academy in 2009, he shot many documentaries about musicians, bands and festivals.

Lü's film shares the name of the exhibition, *The Adolescence of an Era*, as it captures the state of the generation.

"Chinese new music is in its adolescence," Lü says. "Musicians use their

music to release previously suppressed thoughts and social pressures, voice with passion, rock with power. That is the strength of our era."

The film records the hundreds of stars whose images are displayed at the exhibition through the words of the artists themselves, including Zuo Xiaozhou, Shen Lihui, Huang Liaoyuan and Zhang Fan.

"At first, Chai appears in the film to introduce his creative background and photography concepts, then the rock stars come out to tell the stories of the photos."

"The opportunity is rare. All the legendary stars get together in one place to tell their story – that's why the movie is precious," Lü says.

"The one that touched me the most was titled 'Rock Dad.' In it, bassist Lao Dao of heavy metal group Twisted Machine hugs his frightened son, who starts crying during the drummer's warm-up. The photo really showed the love of the musician father," he says.

Chai says the photographs show a side of the musicians not expressed in their songs.

In Europe and the Americas, rock photojournalism is a thriving industry – the same cannot be said for China. Few photographers are interested in the field, since it earns little money.

Chai is one of the exceptions.

As a witness to the stars' rise, he makes it his personal mission to help people learn

more about great rock musicians.

"Chai is referred to as the living Lei Feng of rock. I want to do something like what Chai has done," Lü says.

"I respect people who have dreams and try to realize their dreams. Chai and many musicians are such people, and that's why I find them interesting," he says.

Lü's next project will be a music documentary to record the stories of 100 independent musicians. "Most of them are living hard lives, but they persist in their dreams."

Through their efforts, independent voices in music are attracting more listeners – Lü remains positive about rock's future in China.

"The government's attitude is shifting from ignoring it to encouraging and applauding rock composers. That's a good thing. It means rock is becoming a real industry."

“Everyone has a dream, but only those with determination can realize it.”

”

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Indie film



Lü Hongfeng's documentary tells the stories behind the exhibition photos through short interviews with the musicians.

BEIJING TODAY

Editor: Zhang Dongya Designer: Zhao Yan

Beijing's first camping park brings nature closer

By Chu Meng

Urbanites rarely get the chance to go outside the city. But for those who don't want to look like homebodies yet would rather not spend half a day stuck in traffic trying to escape the downtown, there's now another option: a huge camping park inside the city.



A US-imported RV in the park
Photos provided by Beijing International Auto Camping Park

Beijing International Auto Camping Park, the city's first recreational venue for mobile houses, recreational vehicles, trailers and camps, opened for business on August 20.

The park is located at South Garden Village in Fengtai District. It is 3 kilometers south of South Fourth Ring Road, just east of South Garden Airport. It is currently the first and only natural camping park near the city's downtown area. There are 600 acres of woods and wetlands.

It is split into three sections: a campground, equestrian grounds and Wild Park and a deer wetland park.

The first campground for mobile houses

The camp sites are equipped with 300 mobile detachable homes and 10 recreational vehicles. There's also a picnic area, providing enough room for 200 camps 500 families at one time.

After entering the park and driving on a stretch of sand and stone paths, visitors will find dozens of miniature European and American-style villas scattered in forests and next to ponds. These villas are actually mobile houses. Some are simple, inspired by chic city apartments that house four people. Others are double-decked, like countryside inns, housing up to eight.

"Those houses were all made with environmentally friendly and recyclable low-carbon materials, similar to the materials used for airplanes' passenger cabin," said Lu Jun, the park's general manager. "They can be easily relocated according to the owners' needs and environmental conditions."

He said that the mobile houses, or static caravans, were built in factories rather than on site. They are usually transported by tractor-trailers over public roads.

Mobile houses are usually placed in one location and left there permanently, but they do retain the ability to be moved. If one looked beyond these homes' exteriors, one would find strong trailer frames, axles, wheels and tow-hitches that ensure the unit doesn't break down in bad weather conditions.



The camp features American-style mobile homes.

Mobile houses in the park have as much as 70 square meters of space inside, with double-bed rooms, TVs, bathrooms and kitchens with electric stoves. They are also equipped with air conditioning and a functioning water-wastewater system.

Single-deck houses go for 1,500 yuan per night, while double-deck ones cost 2,500 yuan.

Lu said they imported the materials to build these houses from Europe and the US, since Chinese factories currently don't have the

ing at destinations."

Beijing's RV park might change that. The park has received support from the West Virginia-based National School of RV, and Campground Management of America has signed an agreement to help with park management.

Lu hopes Beijing's park will lead to more being built outside the city. She harbors aspirations of going beyond China, driving perhaps to Europe. One day she would like to drive coast-to-coast across the US.

"Loading up luggage and seeing the country via its highways, byways, campgrounds and tourists traps is a classic American summertime pursuit," said William Zarit, Minister Counselor for



Milu deer wetlands

ability to manufacture such houses. A professional RV venue

The 10 RVs in the park were imported from the US, costing 5 to 10 million yuan each. In the opening week, five of the RVs were bought by visitors from Beijing, Guangzhou, Shandong and Shanxi provinces.

"The park can provide parking for 50 RVs. People can drive their own RVs or rent them," Lu said.

One of the restrictions to the development of an RV industry in China is lack of infrastructure. Also, traffic rules that require a heavy vehicle license for larger RVs has put off potential buyers.

"We have done all the usual kinds of travel," said a businesswoman named Liu Xiaofan, one of the RV buyers. "Now we want to enjoy our lives, and our RV is great. However, we have few places to park after arriv-

Commercial Affairs at the US embassy in Beijing, who attended the park's opening ceremony as a special guest.

"And now it has come to China," he said.

Equestrian grounds and milu deer's wetlands

For visitors who simply want to get closer to nature, the camping park also has an equestrian grounds. The 5,000-square meter equestrian court includes tracks, training fields, stables and a quarantine center, and is able to host professional equestrian competitions and open-air musical festivals.

Next to it is a recreation area with



A mobile home's interior

facilities for rock climbing, bungee jumping, sand volleyball and swimming. Children can also have fun at the butterfly glasshouse, insect museum, wild duck pool and tree-house climbing area.

East of the equestrian park is a national wetlands for milu, known as "David's deer," a species of deer unique to China. The first part was opened last October. A second part was just completed.

There are currently 50 wild milu deer living in the 4,500-square-meter space, which contains hundreds of ponds. This wetlands aids water filtration, enhances the quality of downstream water and can be a supplement to groundwater.

"Visitors can only view those animals from a distance because they are easily frightened," Li said.

Beijing International Auto Camping Park

Where: 369 Tuanhe Lu, South Garden Village, Fengtai District

Getting there: Take Bus 369, 676, 937 or 957 and get off at Tuanhe Stop. Or take Subway Line 4 and get off at Xingong station, then take a taxi (10 yuan).

Open: 24 hours

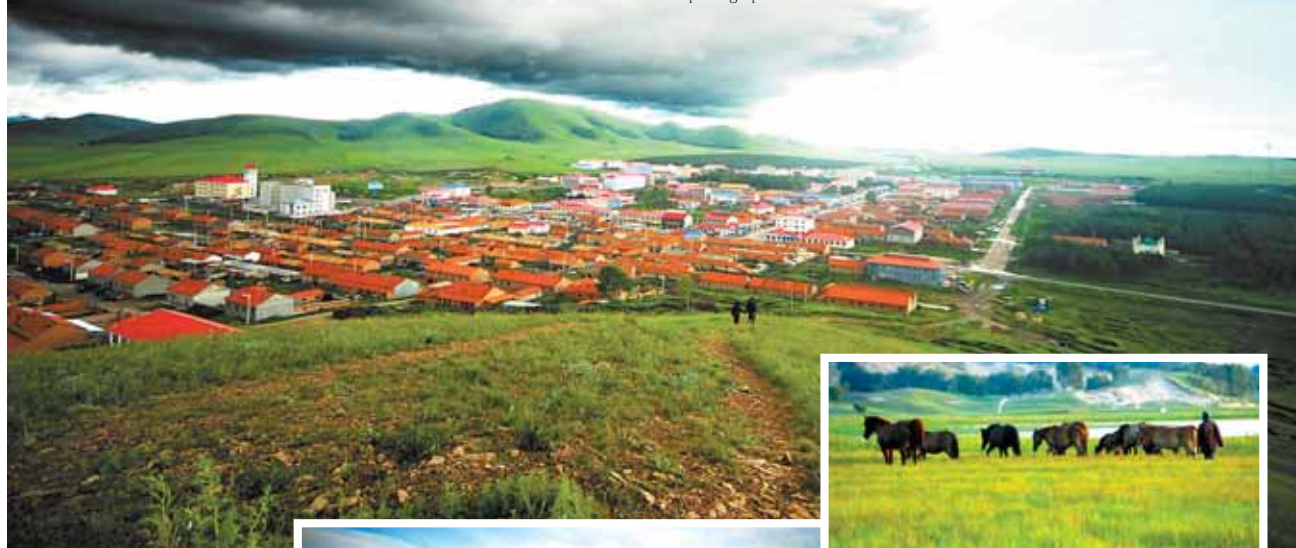
Cost: 1,500 to 2,500 yuan for mobile home; 5,000 to 10,000 yuan for a yearly membership

Tel: 6796 1280

Saihan Ba, photographers' dreamworld

By Zhang Dongya

Saihan Ba, or Saihan Dam, is quickly becoming a hot destination for a weekend tour. With its surrounding beautiful grasslands, it is known as a "photographer's heaven."



Birch forests, grasslands, lakes, wetlands and valleys are all part of the scenery at Saihan Ba.

Bashang generally refers to the area of rolling grasslands just north of Zhangjiakou to northern Chengde, both in Hebei Province. Bashang is divided into Zhangbei Bashang, Fengning Bashang and Saihan Ba.

For photographers, however, only Saihan Ba matters.

"When I first came to Saihan Ba one autumn six years ago, the stunning scenery, with its abundance of color, was so captivating," said photographer Peter Wu. "So I went there again with some photography friends the next summer. Although we were caught in pouring rain, the clear sky, floating clouds, blossoming flowers and gentle wind left me with deep impressions. After that, I got sick thinking about how much I missed that place."

Saihan Ba, a national forest park, is like the backyard garden of Beijing. Located north of Weichang County in Chengde, Saihan Ba is snuggled between the plateaus of Inner Mongolia and mountains of Hebei. It is the largest forest park in north China, at 27,000 hectares. It is also part of the Mulan Hunting Ground, a royal hunting ground during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911).

Saihan Ba includes Red Hill Army Horse Ranch and Jixie Forest Farm. Usually, travel itineraries begin from Beijing and go through Weichang County, Jixie Forest Farm and Red Hill Army Horse Ranch. A detour will go through Zhangbei and reach Saihan Ba from the other side of Red Hill Army Horse Ranch. This will take travelers through Birch Valley, a great place for photos.

Birch forests, grasslands, lakes, wetlands and valleys are all along the way. It is pleasant and cool in the



Lakes are good places to take pictures.

summer, with temperatures rarely exceeding 25 C.

Wild Duck Lake

Starting from Red Hill Army Horse Ranch to Jiangjun Paozi, or General Lake, you will find a small pedestrian path that leads to Wild Duck Lake, thus named because it's home to many wild ducks.

This is a good place to take pictures, not just of the ducks but also small yellow flowers. The lake is surrounded by small hills full of them. When the wind blows, the petals flutter toward the water, forming a layer of yellow gauze on the surface.

The best time to take pictures is in the early morning and at dusk. Veteran photographers prefer the evening because the perfect light lingers.

Lama Mountain

Located on the west side of Red Hill Army Horse Ranch, Lama Mountain is a good place to catch the sun rise from the other side of mountain. Sunlight hits the red-roofed houses at the foot of mountain and creates a vintage scene, especially if there's a little mist.

During peak season, the long and short lenses of photographers will all come out around Lama Mountain during sunrise. The mountain peak is considered the best place to take pictures, so many photographers will hike up in the dark. Be warned, however, that the peak



The grasslands at Saihan Ba are often dotted with horses and flocks of sheep.

can get quite crowded.

Beigou

Near the mountain's base is Beigou, or North Valley. There is terrific scenery here, especially the elegant rises and falls of mountain slopes. The roads here aren't good, so an off-road vehicle is recommended for further exploration around this part.

Sanguaizi Gou

This is a valley with many switchbacks. It features a large area of cole flowers, which blossom in July and August. With the development of local tourism, the road conditions here are much improved. Some years, however, farmers will forgo planting cole flowers in order to plant more crops.

Princess Lake

Locals call the lake Xida Paozi. Nearby is a famous small village called Calabash Sunset Village, where there are flocks of sheep. On the grassland, there a small zigzagging river cuts through, with flocks of cattle and sheep always around.

Other shooting sites

Birch Valley

Birch Valley Park is home to a forest of birch trees. During the summer, there are small clusters of pink flowers around the trees, forming a colorful scene.

Toad Dam

Called Hama Ba among locals, this is another destination for shutterbugs. Photographers recommend going in the morning, when you can get good pictures of the grassland dotted with shrubs and flocks of sheep.



Saihan Ba is considered a photographer's heaven.

CFP Photos

Travel information

Getting to Saihan Ba: Drive along Beijing-Chengde Expressway to Chengde, then take Chengwei Lu to Weichang County, then National Way 111 to Saihan Ba. Or take a train from Beijing North Railway Station to Siheyong Station in Weichang County, which costs 45 yuan and takes six hours, then transfer to the long-distance bus to Saihan Ba.

Admission to Saihan Ba National Forest Park: 130 yuan (including scenic spots like Moon Lake)

Admission to Jiangjun Paozi (General Lake): 60 yuan

Admission to Saihan Tower: 20 yuan

Notes:

1. There's a big temperature gradient from day to night. The current temperature is about 25 C during the day and 11 C at night, but it can get as low as 6 C these days. Warm clothing is recommended.

2. In September, the sunlight can still be intense, so you are advised to bring sunglasses and sunscreen.

Dolls not just for girls

By Wei Xi

Last March, Comilla Liu founded Dollsky, China's first ball-jointed doll fanzine. Together with Tian Tian, a graduate student of Peking University.

The fanzine is intended to spread information about dolls and provide avid doll collectors with the latest information.



Ball-jointed dolls have human-like faces, hair styles and accessories.



Doll face painted by Mimic

Photo provided by Mimic



Ball-jointed dolls on display at the Third Dolly Paradise Exhibition

Photos provided by Tian Tian



Blythe makes super-deformed dolls

Doll collecting has something of a negative image when it comes up in conversation.

While the public has long seen dolls as children's toys, it was the airing of *Bang Bang Mang* in 2008 on BTV-8 that convinced many that being an adult collector should be a source of shame.

The show followed an obsessive collector named Xiao Qin who cared only for a doll she had named Tongtong. She spoke to it like a real person, fed it real food, took the doll wherever she went and threw a fit when others tried to take or touch the doll.

The program upset a number of collectors, who accused the TV station of manufacturing the story rather than reporting real events. Some say it tarnished their love for their dolls.

The program drew unwanted attention to the hobby – especially since many collectors had a hard time explaining their doll obsessions.

"When I was a child, all I wanted was candy. Candy could solve everything. When I grew up, candy wasn't enough to make me forget about unhappy experiences. That's when I discovered ball-jointed dolls," says Mu Jin, a doll collector.

"Dolls can make me happy again – like when I was a child."

Most serious doll collectors buy ball-jointed dolls or dolls from lines such as Blythe, Pullip, Dal or Momoko, all of which are exquisitely designed when compared to Barbie dolls. The dolls cost between hundreds and thousands of yuan.

The Momoko lineup and most ball-jointed dolls are designed to follow human body proportions, whereas Blythe, Pullip and Dal dolls have oversized heads and miniature bodies. Momoko dolls tend to be more posable.

Cris Yang, design director of a Chinese doll company, has collected dolls for more than 10 years. To date, her collection includes more than 100 Barbie dolls, five ball-jointed dolls, a Dal and more than 20 Blythes, Pullips and Momokos.

"Like many girls, I loved Barbie

as a child and began collecting them in 2002. Later on, I found out discovered ball-jointed dolls and found them exceptionally beautiful," Yang says. "I bought my first in May 2006."

Yang is picky about the dolls she collects: they must be attractive when viewed from any angle and have a good body shape.

Yang says Barbie dolls are targeted to children whereas Blythe, Pullip and Momoko dolls are made for adults.

Her childhood interest led Yang to study doll clothing design and creation in 2005; two years later, she founded Rose Spring, her doll fashion label.

"I like luxurious and dreamy looking clothes – things that have a lot of detail," she says.

Mimic, a 24-year-old doll designer, transitioned into the hobby from her major in sculpting in 2008.

The extreme detail required in ball-jointed doll design makes it difficult for Mimic to complete her own dolls.

"At the moment, I am only making doll accessories, like tools for the dolls," she says. Previously she painted doll faces, a skill she learned from a friend.

"I loved everything related to ball-jointed dolls," Mimic says. "I feel happy when I am working on them."

"I thought about doing this as a profession, but many of the oils used for painting doll faces are toxic," she says.

Comilla Liu and Tian Tian co-manage Dollsky.com, the largest doll BBS on the mainland.

Among its 10,726 registered users, more than 70 percent are between the ages of 18 and 29.

Liu and Tian had also organized three Dolly Paradise conventions to help doll owners exchange their experiences

and give doll companies a chance to present their latest products.

"The idea to organize a convention came in 2007. I was attending the Hong Kong Dolly Paradise," Liu says. "The atmosphere there really impressed me, and I realized it was hard for mainland doll collectors to pack up and travel so far to attend."

The first Beijing Dolly Paradise was not easy: the organization was handled by volunteers and only eight stalls ended up being used to present doll collections.

Liu and Tian had to pay 800 yuan out of their own pockets and work until midnight each day to break even.

"But the people who came were really happy, and they made us believe that we needed to give the convention another try. That's when it went annual," Liu says.

At last year's convention, there were more than 80 stalls in use and 1,000 visitors.

Unlike many doll collectors, who are not understood by their family and are forced to collect in secret, Tian is supported by her family.

"They think I can meet more friends in the community, broaden my horizons and learn new skills like editing and photography by working on the Dollsky fanzine," she says.

Although *Dollsky* has published three issues, it is still contained within the Dollsky BBS community.

"All articles were written by volunteers without any payment. Some doll companies contribute money to the fanzine," Tian says.

Liu and Tian are currently preparing to apply for a CN Serial Number so they can begin publishing *Dollsky* as a real magazine.



Hotel



Celebrate your stay with mooncakes

Celebrate your stay at the Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town by adding 50 yuan per room per night at the best flexible rate. Enjoy one Crowne Moonlight Superior Gift Box valued at 188 yuan. Grab your chance and reserve now!

Where: Crowne Plaza Beijing Chaoyang U-Town, 3 Sanfeng North Area, Chaoyang District (southeast of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Building)

When: Until September 12

Tel: 5909 6688

Two landmark Ritz-Carlton Hotels in Wuhan and Dalian

The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company cemented its position as the largest and fastest-growing luxury hotel company in China with the announcement of agreements with the Shanghai Greenland Group, one of the country's premier property developers, to develop two new Ritz-Carlton hotels: The Ritz-Carlton, Wuhan and The Ritz-Carlton, Dalian.

These hotels are being built at the top of landmark developments in these two key cities. The Ritz-Carlton, Wuhan will be located at the top of the 606-meter-high Wuhan Greenland Center, while The Ritz-Carlton, Dalian will occupy floors 64 to 81 of the 518-meter-high Dalian Greenland Center – both will be the tallest buildings in each city. They will expand The Ritz-Carlton's China locations to 13 hotels by 2017.

Scheduled to open in 2017, the 330-room The Ritz-Carlton, Wuhan will be located in the center of the Wuchang Binjiang CBD. MICE facilities will include spacious meeting space, a health club, pool and spa.

Located in the heart of Dalian's Donggang CBD, The Ritz-Carlton, Dalian will offer a prime location in the city. The 300-room hotel will form part of a mixed-use development and will offer a variety of restaurants, bars and other facilities to its luxury guests, whether they are visiting on business or leisure.

Dinning

Cheese assortment available at Aria

There is nothing like cheese. This month, Aria is presenting the richest and freshest traditional cheeses with hints of herbs and spices: everything from Cheese King Brie de Meaux to Ciresa Taleggio DOP.

Let chef of the year Matthew McCool take you on a cheese tour of France with high-quality, innovative dishes. For a perfect match, complement your cheese with a glass of Grüner Veltliner Kabinett or chianti.

Where: China Word Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: September 1-30

Tel: 6505 2266



Detox and revive

Revive your skin with a detoxifying treatment that combines refined olive grain exfoliation and envelopment in zesty citrus oils. A deep cleansing facial promises to leave your complexion instantly bright and radiant following the relaxing two-hour experience.

Where: The Westin Beijing Chaoyang, 7 Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

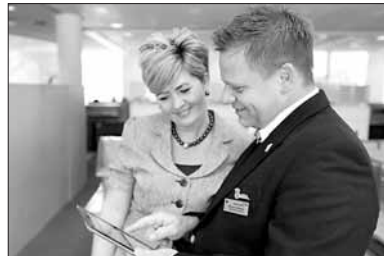
When: Until October 31

Cost: 1,100 yuan

Tel: 5922 8531



Airline



BA revolutionizes customer service with iPads

British Airways' cabin crew is using the latest iPad to bring a new dimension to in-flight customer service.

The iPads enable the cabin crew to have prior awareness of customer preferences and a greater understanding of each customer's previous travel arrangements, allowing them to offer a truly personalized service.

The iPad lets crew quickly identify where each customer is seated, who they are travelling with, their Executive Club status and any special meal requests. It gives the cabin crew a whole library of information at their fingertips including timetables, safety manuals and customer service updates. It also means any issues can be logged with ground-based colleagues around the network prior to departure so solutions can be delivered while the flight is airborne.

When passengers board, the cabin crew used to be handed a huge stack of paper with information on up to 337 customers. With the new iPads, the crew will simply refresh their screen when the doors have closed using the wireless 3G network.

"The iPad is allowing us to offer a more personalized on-board service, but the possibilities for future development are endless. We're receiving great feedback from cabin crew and customers already. It allows the crew to offer the thoughtful service they want to deliver and customers are treated as valued guests," said Bill Francis, British Airways' head of in-flight customer service.

Rent

Two-bedroom apartment in Wudaokou

The Furun Jiayuan and Huaqing Jiayuan communities are located near the Wudaokou subway, a 10-minute walk from Tsinghua University.

The area is pleasant, safe and green. The flats are spacious, light, beautifully furnished and priced between 5,500 and 7,000 yuan per month, including management fees and heating.

Each has two bedrooms, one bathroom and a kitchen. Total floor area is approximately 110 square meters.

The capital's housing market is a mess. Have you been cheated before on your rent? Call me. I will not lie to tenants, and will do my best to provide good service.

Contact: Zhang Jian

Tel: 135 8181 8114

Email: zhangqingjian114@sina.com

Clean, furnished apartment at Hairun International, Lido

The Hairun International apartments are located beside the Holiday Inn, Lido.

For rent is a four-bedroom unit with an attached storage room. There is a bright bathroom with a bathtub and shower, a kitchen with an oven, microwave and fridge.

Everything is fully furnished with fine furniture. Total floor space is 229 square meters.

It is a convenient place to live with neighborhood access to European, Indian and Chinese restaurants, a supermarket, a Starbucks and several bars.

Contact: Larry

Tel: 134 2608 5833

Email: century21_agent@163.com



(By Jackie Zhang)

Nightlife
Buyi Band

Started in 1995 in Yinchuan, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Buyi blends traditional Chinese musical elements with rock. The lead guitarist also plays the guzheng. Other traditional instruments include the hulusi, a free-reed instrument found in Yunnan Province, and dizi, which mix with the sounds of modern instruments such as the electric cello and trumpet.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 40 yuan advance purchase, 50 yuan at the door

Tel: 6401 4611

**Sat, Sept. 3****Nightlife**
Haomeimei

This folk band was founded by two independent songwriters who decided to meet after they heard each other's songs online. The band has expanded to include two others.

Where: Lanxi Club, 183 Jiu Gulou

Dajie, Xicheng District

When: 8 pm

Admission: 30 yuan

Tel: 6403 2597

Exhibition**The Principle****— Gao Lei Solo Exhibition**

Through paintings and installations, Gao discusses the relationship between an individual's thinking and the social environment.

Where: White Space Beijing, 255 Caochangdi Village, Chaoyang District

When: Until October 9, daily except

Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 8456 2054

**Fri, Sept. 2****Sun, Sept. 4****Mon, Sept. 5****Concert****Ivo Janssen Piano Recital**

At his debut concert at Concertgebouw in Amsterdam in 1988, this Dutch pianist was awarded many prizes, such as the Jacques Vink

Prize. This program includes Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750): The Goldberg Variations.

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 18 Zhodengyu Lu, Xicheng District

When: September 5, 7:30 pm

Admission: 30-380 yuan

Tel: 6417 7845

**Tue, Sept. 6****Exhibition****Nothing Gold Can Stay**

This is a solo exhibition by Iranian-born and Berlin-based artist Shahram Entekhabi. The title comes from a line in a Robert Frost poem in which Frost laments the fall from Eden using gold as a metaphor and describing a tree's fecund beauty and eventual decay. Entekhabi uses Frost's poem to get viewers to rethink the role of oil as a global commodity.

Where: Other Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until October 16, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6431 9684

**Nightlife**
Blackwater

Drawing from its rich repertoire of Irish songs, Blackwater is a band of international musicians based in Beijing that was founded last year. Singer Desmond McGarry is Irish-Canadian, guitarist Daniel Brustman hails from the US, accordionist Zoe Wang from China and Nico Torrese on the tenor banjo and mandolin from France.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 30 yuan

Tel: 6401 4611

**Movie**
Goodbye, Children
(1987)

Julien is an 11-year-old student in a Catholic boarding school during the Nazi occupation of France. The headmaster of the school defies anti-Semitic policies and enrolls Jewish children, including Jean Bonnet, who becomes Julien's new friend.

Where: Blue Goat Cafe, No. 3 Shuimo Xinqiu (150 meters north of the west gate of Tsinghua University), Haidian District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6265 5069

Wed, Sept. 7**Movie****Léon: The Professional (1994)**

Luc Besson's thriller is about an assassin, Leon, working for a mob kingpin and a 12-year-old girl, Mathilda, whose parents and brother have been killed in a raid by corrupt DEA agents. Mathilda begs Leon to become her caretaker and to teach her his skills as an assassin.

Where: China Film Archive, 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission: 20 yuan

Tel: 8229 6153

(By He Jianwei)

